

Speak English With Vanessa

Free PDF Worksheet

Speak English in 30 Minutes: Advanced English Lesson

Dear English Learner,

Get ready to speak confidently! I recommend reading the worksheet out loud and using the blank space on the last page to answer my challenge question. [Click here to watch the original video](#). Thanks so much for learning English with me!

*Your teacher,
Vanessa*

Advanced Vocabulary in the News

As Asheville City council **ponders the idea** of purchasing a hotel to provide housing for **the homeless**, the company that owns a neighboring shopping center prepares for a **legal fight**.

To ponder an idea: *to wonder or consider something carefully*

Have you ever **pondered** what it would be like to speak English fluently?

Note: "To ponder" is more often used in formal situations, and "wonder" is used in casual situations

The homeless: *someone who doesn't have a home*

Several organizations give coats to **the homeless** during the winter.

Legal fight: *settling an issue through legal intervention*

The court case will be dropped because the costs involved in a **legal fight** are too high.

The city is looking at a Ramada near River Ridge Marketplace, which is home to 26 businesses, including Best Bride Prom & Tux.

Owner Denise Knapp feels a **homeless shelter** and a **retail area** would be **anything but an ideal marriage**. She says Horne Properties, which owns River Ridge, is ready for a legal fight.

Homeless shelter - *place where people without a home can stay*

He stayed at the **homeless shelter** until he found a job and an apartment.

Retail area - *a group of shops located near each other*

Shopping is a lot more convenient now that a new **retail area** opened up near our house.

Anything but an ideal marriage - *a union or partnership that won't work together at all*

Keeping the cat and the dog cooped up together in this small room is **anything but an ideal marriage**.

Folks at Beauty Bar Asheville say the homeless population has already caused concerns about safety and trash. So, **if the city moves forward with the project** at River Ridge, the fear is that things could get even worse.

Moves forward - *proceeds, decides to take action and begin*

We won't be able to **move forward** with construction until the loan is approved.

“I’m not happy about it at all,” says stylist Susan Shepherd.

“It’s been an influx the past few months of trash in our parking lot.”

Influx - *significant increase*

With this sudden **influx** of rain our crops are growing really quickly.

The need for such housing for the homeless heightened recently. Last week, 50 homeless people moved out of the Red Roof Inn on Smoky Park Highway. The city **partnered with the chain** to give them temporary refuge during the pandemic.

Partnered with the chain - *worked together with the Red Roof Inn™ hotel chain*

*A chain is a group of similar hotels, restaurants, or other businesses that are located in a variety of locations

This **chain** of restaurants will be expanding to 3 new cities this year.

McDonalds™ and Starbucks™ Coffee are popular examples of chains that are global. They can be found in cities all around the world.

The **nonprofit** Homeward Bound will soon **close on the purchase** of a Days Inn to help address the need. But the executive director tells News 13 that space may not be available for residents until late 2022.

Nonprofit - *an organization that has legal status to operate with a social benefit*

The American Cancer Society is really committed to finding a cure for cancer so I donate to this **nonprofit** every year.

Close on the purchase - *real estate term for completing a sale*

After the inspections are complete we hope to **close on the purchase** of our new home.

Folks we spoke to at River Ridge say the city's project would create more problems than it solves. "We don't want that in our community, **we don't want that in our backyard**, I know that our city council doesn't want it **in their backyard**," Knapp said.

In our/their backyard - *located in a nearby proximity*

I live in the country because I don't want a lot of traffic **in my backyard**.

"It's hard to conduct a business and **keep a good reputation** when that's in your parking lot every day coming in," Shepherd said.

The sale of the Ramada property has not yet been finalized. We reached out to the City of Asheville for an interview about the matter, but the city declined our request.

Keep/up a good reputation - *maintain a positive image in the eyes of the public*

If the restaurant owner continues to argue with his customers he's not going to be able to **keep up a good reputation** and he'll probably lose a lot of business.

Modal Verbs for American English

May	Might	Must
Can	Will	
Could	Should	Would

Note: *Americans never use the modal verbs “ought” and “shall”*

Rule #1: Don't change the modal verb

We **should** go to the movies after dinner tonight.

VS

We ~~**shoulds**~~ go to the movies after dinner tonight.

He **might** not like it if we show up late.

VS

He ~~**mights**~~ not like it if we show up late.

Can you help me with something?

VS

~~**Cans**~~ you help me with something?

Rule #2: The infinitive comes directly after the modal verb without “to”

He **might join** us for dinner.

VS

He **might ~~to~~ join** us for dinner.

If we don't leave now, we **will be** late for the movie.

VS

If we don't leave now, we **will ~~to~~ be** late for the movie.

I **can help** you with that.

VS

I **can ~~to~~ help** you with that.

Rule #3: Questions are formed with inversion

Can I go to dinner with you?

VS

I ~~can~~ go to dinner with you?

Will we be late for the movie?

VS

We ~~will~~ be late for the movie?

Should you be doing that?

VS

You should be doing that?

Quiz time!

Circle the correct modal verb. See the next page for correct answers.

I was going to drive my car to dinner, but I think it (mights/ might) have a flat.

(Can you/ You can) drive?

I (shall/ should) have had it looked at when I first noticed the problem.

If you agree to drive, I (will buy/ will to buy) your dinner.

I (can pay/ cans to pay) for your movie ticket too, since I will also need you to drive me home afterwards.

6 Bonus Modal Verb Phrases and Idioms

1. "I think I **can**, I think I **can**, I think I **can**!" (from "The Little Engine that Could")
an inspirational phrase made popular by a children's book

When things get really hard, I remember the phrase from my favorite childhood book and I tell myself, "I **think I can**, I **think I can**, I **think I can**!"

2. **Coulda, shoulda, woulda** ("could have, should have, would have")
to dismiss regret or worries about things from the past

I could have made a better score on my test. I should have studied harder. I would have gotten a better grade if I had just tried. **Coulda, shoulda, woulda.**

3. As ready as (one) **will** ever be.
someone can't prepare any more

"Are you ready to graduate college?"

“As ready as I’ll ever be!”

4. I **should** hope so!

you expect something to be true; usually said angrily or indignantly

He offered to pay for the damage that he caused after crashing his car into her house? I **should** hope so!

5. Be careful what you wish for, it **might** come true.

what you think you want may not be what you want after all

You think you want to be in charge of everything? **Be careful what you wish for, it might come true.**

6. As luck **may** have it

something happened because of good or bad luck

I got a flat tire, but **as luck may have it**, the man who stopped to help me is the man I ended up marrying. It was meant to be!

Answers to the quiz

I was going to drive my car to dinner, but I think it (~~mights/ might~~) have a flat.

(~~Can you/ You can~~) drive?

I (~~shall/ should~~) have had it looked at when I first noticed the problem.

If you agree to drive, I (~~will buy/ will to buy~~) your dinner.

I (~~can pay/ cans to pay~~) for your movie ticket too, since I will also need you to drive me home afterwards.

Phrasal Verbs for Your Nighttime Routine

1. To get ready for: *to make preparations for something*
Every night, we help the kids **get ready for** bed.
2. To tuck in: *to pull the covers around someone in bed*
After bedtime stories, we **tuck in** the kids.
3. To snuggle up: *to curl up for comfort*
My son loves **to snuggle up** with his stuffed animals.
*In the US, children say “stuffed animals” or “stuffies.”
4. To doze off: *to fall asleep*
I am lucky that my son **dozes off** pretty quickly at night.
5. To tidy up: *to make neat and orderly*
Before bed, I like **to tidy up** the kitchen.
6. To fill up: *to make something full*
I **fill up** a cup with water and place it by my bed.
7. To turn on: *to make something operate or function*
Don't forget **to turn on** the robot vacuum at night so your floors are clean in the morning!
8. To check on: *to monitor for safety and security*
I heard a noise, so I **checked on** my sons to make sure they were ok.
9. To brew up: *to prepare tea or coffee*
Dan **brews up** some herbal tea every night before bed.

10. To cut out: *to stop eating or doing something*

He drinks tea because he is trying **to cut out** beer.

11. To put away: *to store something in its usual place*

Dan **puts away** the dishes from the dishwasher.

12. To lie down: *to rest in a reclined position*

I like **to lie down** on the couch at the end of a long day.

13. To read through: *to learn about something by reading about it*

I **read through** an interesting book about Colorado.

14. To chat about: *casual, informal talking*

After the kids go to bed, we have time **to chat about** the day.

15. To finish off: *to completely consume something*

I like **to finish off** my tea before it gets cold.

16. To tiptoe into: *to walk quietly, on your toes*

I **tiptoed into** the room because I didn't want to wake the sleeping baby.

17. To wash off: *to clean something*

At night, I take a shower and **wash off** my makeup.

18. To put on: *to place on your body*

I **put on** my favorite pajamas before bed.

*In the US, it's common to say "pajamas" or "pjs."

19. To toss into: *to gently throw something*

I **tossed** my shirt **into** the laundry basket.

20. To hang up: *to put something on a hanger or hook*

I **hang up** my pants to wear again tomorrow.

21. To spit out: *to force something out of the mouth*

I **spit out** the toothpaste after I brush my teeth.

22. To wash out: *to clean out with water*

I take a sip of water **to wash out** the toothpaste from my mouth.

23. To brush through: *to use a brush or comb to remove tangles and make hair neat*

I **brush through** my hair at night so that it isn't so tangled when I wake up.

24. To take out/ To take off: *to remove*

I **take out** my contacts./ I **take off** my glasses.

Time To Sleep

25. To turn off: *to stop the operation or function of something.*

Before I go to sleep, I **turn off** all the lights.

26. To get into: *to enter into*

I **get into** bed at the end of a long day.

27. To curl up: *to get cozy or comfortable*

I like to **curl up** under the covers when it's cold or stormy weather.

28. To nod off: *to start falling asleep*

Sometimes Dan will **nod off** first, sometimes I will.

29. To drift off: *to fall asleep*

When I'm exhausted, it doesn't take long for me to **drift off**.

30. To pass out: *to fall asleep fast and deep*

If it's been a long, tiring day, we will all **pass out** by bedtime.

Bonus Phrasal Verbs About Sleep

- To sleep over: *to spend the night at someone else's house*

When kids are young, they like **to sleep over** at a friend's house.

Going to **a sleepover** is common in the US. [noun]

- To stay up: *not going to bed*

At sleepovers, kids like **to stay up** late, watching movies or playing games, and eating junk food.

- To sleep on it: *to delay making a decision until the following day*

If you have a big decision, you should **sleep on it** and make the decision after a good night's rest.

- To sleep it off: *to recover from something by sleeping*

If you aren't feeling well, you need **to sleep it off**— you'll feel better after a full night of sleep.

Vanessa's Challenge Question

Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question: **Tell me about your weekend plans using words and phrases from these lessons.**

Sample answer: *I'm pondering my plans for this weekend. I think I might go to an outdoor concert on Saturday. I could also go to my friend's party. But what I really want to do is put on my comfortable pajamas, snuggle up on the couch, and watch my favorite shows.*

Want to continue becoming a confident English speaker?

>>[Click here to start speaking today](#)<<